

Central Intelligence Agency

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**DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE**

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China and Africa Insurgent Groups: Flagging Support

**Summary**

Chinese aid to the three major insurgent groups in southern Africa (SWAPO, the ANC and the PAC), which increased in 1983 with Beijing's new "independent" foreign policy, has all but evaporated over the past year. Beijing appears to be limiting its assistance to all three groups to some humanitarian aid and rhetorical support for their objectives in international forums. The reduction probably stems in part from Beijing's efforts to cut foreign aid overall. We believe that Beijing also has concluded that these groups are ineffective and, in the case of the ANC and SWAPO, that Chinese efforts to compete for influence with the Soviet Union have not been successful. By concentrating on nonmilitary support for the black cause in southern Africa, Beijing hopes to cultivate the image of a responsible champion of Third World causes. [ ]

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This memorandum was prepared by [ ] Office of East Asian Analysis. Information available as of 16 September 1985 was used in its preparation. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Foreign Affairs, China Division, OEA, [ ]

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### **A Late Interest**

Prior to 1983, China had little contact with the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) or the African National Congress (ANC), both of which rely primarily on Soviet arms and training. China has supplied and trained the traditionally anti-Soviet Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) intermittently since its inception. In 1983, however, Beijing made overtures to SWAPO and the ANC.

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In the last year, however, Beijing has given little to these three groups:

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Beijing continues to offer rhetorical support to all three groups, both in the Chinese press and in international forums. Beijing has consistently supported a negotiated settlement of the Namibia issue based on the tenets of UNSCR 435, which recognizes SWAPO as the representative of the Namibian people. China has also renewed its attacks on the South African policy of apartheid in the last year.

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### **Chinese Motives**

China's overtures in 1983 to SWAPO and the ANC were probably inspired both by a desire to counter Soviet influence in southern Africa and by Beijing's new "independent" foreign policy, first articulated in late 1982. By establishing contact with Soviet-sponsored groups which it had shunned under the "United Front" approach, China undoubtedly hoped to broaden its credentials as a supporter of Third World causes while

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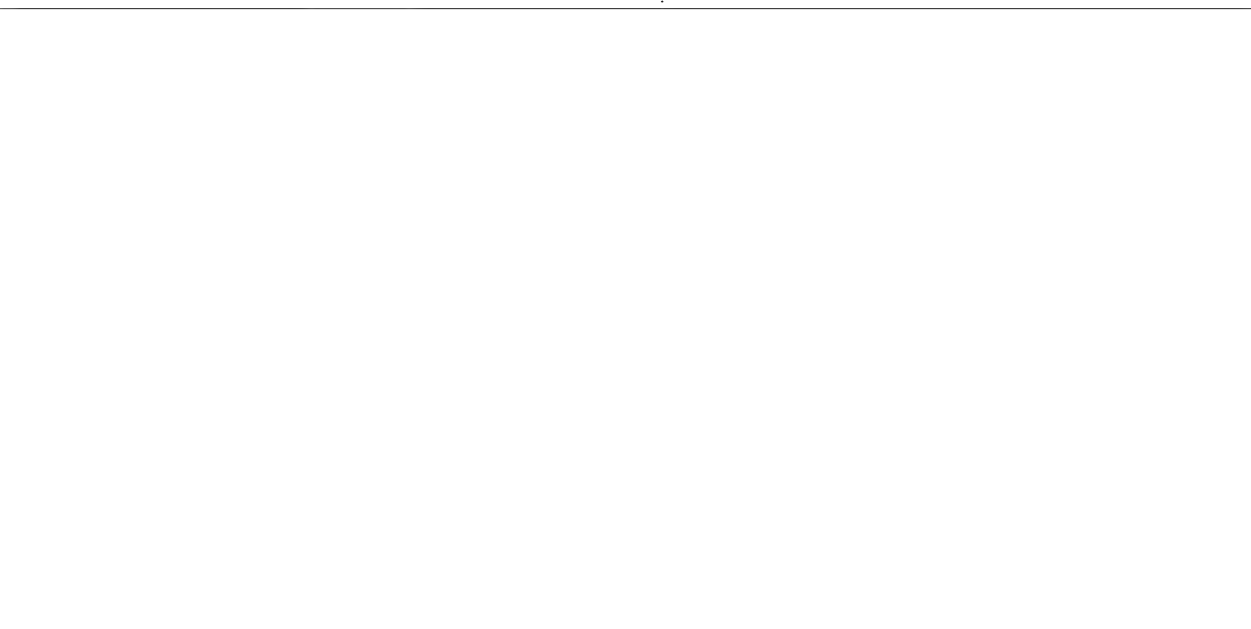
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undermining Moscow's ideological influence.\* [REDACTED]

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China's recent reluctance to continue funding African insurgent military operations probably stems in part from China's efforts to reduce foreign aid overall, and foreign military aid in particular. To further its modernization campaign, China has curbed its foreign aid sharply, cutting total military aid to less developed countries from \$771 million in 1983 to \$165 million in 1984. SWAPO, the PAC and the ANC have taken their share of these cuts. [REDACTED]

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### **Prospects for the Future**

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In our judgment, China will continue to offer mainly diplomatic support for black causes in southern Africa, and small doses of humanitarian aid. Beijing recognizes that it has little influence in the region and is content to pose as a staunch foe of apartheid and defender of Third World causes. The low priority Beijing presently accords southern Africa is unlikely to change unless it concludes that the current unrest in South Africa could build to the point where Moscow will benefit. In that case, Beijing almost certainly would press Washington and the West to take an active role in seeking a solution that would prevent Soviet influence from growing. [REDACTED]

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\* During 1978-1981 China pursued a foreign policy based on what it called the "antihegemonistic United Front." In most circumstances this policy mechanically subordinated regional concerns to the prime goal of opposing any expansion of Soviet influence, often by closely identifying Chinese policy with that of the United States.

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